



DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

<http://www.dfg.ca.gov>



November 25, 2003

Dear Nearshore Fishery Permit holders and Interested and Affected Parties:

You recently received a letter informing you of the closure of the commercial fishery for California sheephead that was to go into effect on November 21, 2003 due to attainment of the annual catch allocation. The letter also provided notice of a recreational fishery closure for lingcod, rockfish, and California scorpionfish effective on the same date.

A recent court ruling imposed a temporary restraining order specifically halting the implementation of this recreational closure. The court concluded that affected parties had not been given adequate notice of the closure as required by regulation. As a result, the Department will be issuing a revised closure notification letter for the recreational fishery. Since the notification processes are the same for sport and commercial fishery closures, the Department has determined that it would be advisable to also issue a revised notification letter for the closure of the commercial California sheephead fishery.

This letter is being sent to inform you of the new closure date. **The commercial fishery for California sheephead will be closed effective midnight, Monday, December 8, 2003** pursuant to Title 14, CCR §52.10. The public and Commission notification required by regulation was provided by news release on November 25, 2003. The closure will apply to all commercial fishing activity for California sheephead in all waters for the remainder of the calendar year, and include all methods of take.

This action had been initiated in an effort to keep catches within allowable annual limits. Recent landing receipt information indicates that the commercial California sheephead allocation of 87,959 pounds has now been exceeded.

Fishermen are advised to check the Department's website for the most up-to-date regulations at [www.dfg.ca.gov/mrd](http://www.dfg.ca.gov/mrd).

If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Deb Wilson-Vandenberg, Research Manager of the Department's Marine Region at (831) 649-2892.

Sincerely,

*Patricia May*